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ECONOMIC OUTLOOK SEMINAR CULMINATES BUSINESS APPRECIATION WEEK

(Bel Air, MD - September 30, 2008) - - Harford County Executive David R. Craig, joined by James Richardson, Director of the Office of Economic Development, Bill Seccurro, Executive Director of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce and approximately 40 leaders of business and industry in the county, wrapped up Harford County Business Appreciation Week with an economic outlook seminar at the Clarion Hotel in Aberdeen today. The keynote speaker was Dr. Joseph E. Cater, III, Chief Economist and President of Market - Economics, Inc., of Annapolis, Maryland.

Dr. Cater presented the group with data regarding employment growth, unemployment rates, the county's competitive advantages in the Baltimore metropolitan region and an analysis of the state and local housing industry.

During the period of September 2007 through September 2008, 385 new jobs were created in Harford County. Additionally, there was more than \$31 million in capital investment and more than 880 thousand square feet of commercial real estate was sold or leased.

Furthermore, the Harford County Office of Economic Development worked with over 110 prospects and helped to locate and expand more than 20 companies. Finally, more than 1,750 job seekers attended the BRAC Job Fair in June. Three additional job fairs are planned for manufacturing, distribution, service and retail employers next year.

On Tuesday, County Executive Craig, members of the Office of Economic Development attended the 2008 Harford County Small Business Administration Award breakfast and ceremony at Harford Community College. Approximately 45 representatives of the business community and those receiving awards attended the event.

Wednesday morning, the county executive, County Treasurer John Scotten along with several members of the cabinet and members of the County Council, met with several members of the business community during a Business Indicators Roundtable. County Executive Craig as well as members of his administration meets on a quarterly basis with representatives of the business community to hear first hand how the economy is progressing and its subsequent impact on the services provided by Harford County government.

Since mid-week, the county executive visited companies in the Edgewood and Aberdeen areas of Harford County. On Wednesday County Executive Craig and the Office of Economic Development staff continued with company visits to Nutramax Laboratories, Inc., Giovanni's Restaurant and La Quinta Inn and Suites. Nutramax is a family owned business founded in 1992, and currently occupies two buildings in the Lakeside Business Park with 220 full-time employees. Giovanni's is another long-time Harford County business. The restaurant is family-owned and operated since 1980. La Quinta Inns opened in Edgewood in 2007 and features 64 spacious guest suites.

Thursday's Aberdeen area visits began with a tour of operations at Harford Bank given by bank president Chuck Jacobs. The bank has six locations in Harford County with more than \$200 million in assets and 70 employees.

The county executive, accompanied by Office of Economic Development Director Jim Richardson and staff, as well as City of Aberdeen officials, then visited the Olive Tree Restaurant complex owned by Nick Hapsis who also is owner of the Holiday Inn, Olive Tree Plaza Buildings I and II and a vacant parcel next to Olive Tree Plaza where he has plans for a Holiday Inn Express.

The SAKS Fifth Avenue Distribution Center, a 450,000 square-foot facility was next to receive a visit. Located in the Hickory Ridge Business Park, they employ more than 450 personnel.

During his visit to the Aberdeen area, the county executive met with Reed Rippin, Principal of RTR Technologies, which was established in 2003 as an operations research firm. Today, RTR Technologies key clients include the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, Naval Air Warfare Center and the Department of Defense Army Test and Evaluation and Command, Communications and Electronics Command, and Army Material Systems Analysis Activity.

Thursday afternoon, County Executive Craig and other local officials, welcomed Survice Engineering to Harford County with a ribbon cutting ceremony at their Belcamp office.

"It is obvious that Wall Street doesn't get it right, yet Main Street does," said County Executive Craig. "Businesses, particularly small businesses are vital to the economic welfare and stability of the economy in Harford County. We appreciate our business partners and look forward to working with them for the overall benefit of our community," Craig remarked.

Commenting on "Harford Business Appreciation Week", Director Richardson stated, "I believe Harford County is well positioned to weather the current economic turbulence that has struck our nation. Nonetheless, Harford County will continue to do all we can to foster and attract new businesses and opportunities to come here," Richardson stated.